



**READ ME
OUTSIDE**

Novacon 32 **Read Me Outside!**

This publication is a guide to restaurants in the Bentley, Willenhall and Walsall area, along with other bits of information that we think might prove useful. On the back cover you will find a Foot Map of the area around the Hotel.

Any comments regarding this publication would be much appreciated -- write to Martin Tudor, 24 Ravensbourne Grove, Willenhall, WV143 1HX (or e-mail empties@breathemail.net).

As you can see from your *Read Me Inside!* the Quality Hotel is offering an interesting and varied convention menu in the Saddle Room Restaurant (next to the No 10 Bar). However, if you fancy eating out of the Hotel you will find yourself spoilt for choice.

A few minutes walk down Bentley Mill Way is the Showcase Cinema complex (see foot map) which has a Deep Pan Pizza (0121-568-8053); the Grosvenor Casino (01922-645222); and the Cinnamon Club Indian restaurant -- where the food is highly recommended by the committee, but the service is **very** slow! (0121-568-6664).

Across the road (and off to your right) from the Quality is the Lane Arms, which offers some food along with locally brewed Highgate & Walsall ales. Around the corner from the Lane Arms, on Bentley Road North, you'll find a late night off licence and newsagents. While across from them, back on Wolverhampton Road West, there is the Bentley Chip Shop (open until 11.30pm Friday & Saturday), the Greedy Pig café and Aroma Balti Indian Takeaway (where you can get a perfectly reasonable curry from around £5+, call 01922-746786).

If you walk down the road beside the Lane Arms (Bentley Road North) you'll find the overflow hotel, the Travel Inn, next

door to which is the family friendly Bentley Green Inn (01922-724485) a Brewsters from Brewers Fayre – which offers a *very* wide range of pub group and a reasonable selection of beers.

Out of the hotel and one mile to your *right* (down Wolverhampton Road West) you will find Willenhall (having passed a petrol station, a 24-hour Spar with cashback facilities and a Woolwich cashpoint, the Red Lion pub, a drive-in McDonalds and Chinese take-away and a couple of other Chinese, Indian and Pizza takeaways on your way).

First, just outside Willenhall town centre, you'll come to the wonderful Ye Old Toll House restaurant – if you want to eat here you will have to book in advance, but it is worth it (01902-605575). I recommend the table d'hôte Menu – excellent value for money – it includes starter, sweet, cheese and biscuits, liqueur coffee and one bottle of wine between four and ranges from £18-£23 per head depending on your main course. Their daily specials feature the most amazing range of fish dishes!

Just beyond the Toll House is the Jewel Balti Restaurant & Take-Away (very basic food but cheap and friendly, unlicensed last time I was there so better check on 01902-605917), the Dale House (pleasant carvery) and the local Wetherspoons the Malthouse (standard Wetherspoons love 'em or hate 'em, they're all pretty much the same) and Somerfield supermarket (which has a hot buffet counter).

Willenhall also features the world famous Lock Museum (01902-634542). Perhaps our Dealers Room organiser and Master Locksmith, Tony Berry, could be prevailed upon to run guided tours on Saturday ****OUCH!****, or perhaps not.

Out of the Hotel and one mile to your *left* (over Junction 10 of the M6) takes you into Walsall, which is home to a vast number of impressive Indian restaurants including Golden Moments (the *overall* winner of the Birmingham Evening Mail Restaurant for the Millennium Competition, tel. 01922-640363) which has amazing food and stunning *art deco* furnishings.

Across the road from Golden Moments is Shimla Peppers – runner up in the Birmingham Evening Mail Restaurant for the

Millennium Competition! Shimla's features a heated courtyard as well as sensational food (01922-640605).

If you don't fancy Indian food I can recommend the Italian food at Sofia's in the Guildhall (01922-632223), the Cantonese at the Mayflower (01922-632612) and the wide range of pub food at the Hogshead (01922-616963). Further details of the many other restaurants in Walsall and surrounding area appear below.

But what has Walsall to offer besides some amazing food?

Well there's the famous £21 million New Art Gallery (01922-654400) featuring *not only* the Garman Ryan Collection (donated to Walsall by Lady Kathleen Garman, widow of sculptor Sir Jacob Epstein) but also *Noddy Holder's voice* in the "speaking elevator"! There is the Walsall Leather Museum – Walsall being Britain's leather capital ("ooh, er, missus!"); the Jerome K. Jerome Birthplace Museum (Stratford may have Shakespeare and Birmingham its Tolkien connection, but Walsall was the birthplace of the author of "Three Men in a Boat" - impressed eh?) *and* the Birchills Canal Museum. All these places of interest plus the impressive Walsall general market in the town centre on Saturday and the largest Sunday market in the Midlands – out at Walsall FC's Bescot Stadium!

How to get to Walsall?

The 529 (stops indicated on Foot Map) runs to Walsall's new £4.2 million "flying saucer" bus station -- just a five minute journey away (at Stand M). The 529 was the first major route in the country to be completely serviced by gas powered vehicles (using Compressed Natural Gas) and most of the buses on the route are wheelchair-friendly, easy access buses with "kneeling suspension". These run every 6 minutes throughout the day and every 20 minutes during the evening. Timetables are available from the Novacon registration desk.

General Information

Cashpoints/Banks

The nearest are:

Woolwich cashpoint in Spar (24 hour shop) which also offers a cashback facility on purchases, Wolverhampton Road, Willenhall.
Abbey National/Link, Park Street, Walsall.
Lloyds/TSB, New Road, Willenhall (opposite J D Wetherspoons).
Lloyds/TSB, Park Street, Walsall.
HSBC, New Road, Willenhall (opposite J D Wetherspoons).
HSBC, St. Paul's Square (facing the steps from the Bus Station).
Halifax, Bridge Street, Walsall.
National Westminster, Park Street, Walsall.
Nationwide/Link, Bridge Street, Walsall.

Post Office

Darwall Street in Walsall, near the Bus station.

Pharmacy

Chemist on Queen Elizabeth Avenue, Bentley – see foot map.
Boots the Chemist, Park Street, Walsall.

Plane/Bus/Train

Flight information: 0121-767-5511.
Local Bus/Rail: Centro Hotline on 0121-200-2700.
Rail National enquiries: 08457-484950.

Taxis

A1 Rosehill, Willenhall, 01902-606090 or 633337
AJK Cars, Walsall, 01922-640630
Bentley Cars, 01902-711121
Walsall TOA Taxis, 01922-642020 or 723623

Events

The Walsall Illuminations at the Walsall Arboretum are featuring the Diwali Celebrations 1-3 November 2002, with Mendhi painting and live dance performances on the bandstand in addition to the illuminations, laser lightshow and children's fairground rides (for under 12s).

Gates open 6.30pm (last entry 9pm) tickets on the gate £5 for adults and £4 for children over 4 years. (Various concessions, and

discounts for advance sales call 01922-653148 or bookings on 01922 653183/653195. Advance tickets on sale from St. Paul's Bus Station in Walsall.)

We can only apologise profusely for the fact that having premiered the first Harry Potter film at Novacon last year we have been unable to persuade distributors to release Harry Potter & the Chamber of Secrets a week earlier. Instead the local Showcase Cinema will be been screening special advance previews from the 8th November, but if you want to pop back...

Eating Out

Listing is by type/variety of food. Obviously I haven't tried all of these personally but those that I have tried and enjoyed are indicated *.

Bear in mind that Walsall is about a mile from the Hotel, Willenhall two miles, Wolverhampton four miles and Aldridge around five miles.

Where known I have included the opening times and/or telephone numbers. I strongly advise calling in advance and booking a table *wherever* you decide to go – they are all going to be very busy!

-- Martin Tudor.

Chinese

* **New Mayflower**, 109-111 Lichfield Street, Walsall. Good buffet, open Mon-Sat 6pm-11pm and Sunday 6pm-10pm, (01922-632612 / 622505).

Silver Sea, Bridge Street, Walsall, stylish looking restaurant – let us know if it is as expensive as it looks! (01922-632588).

* **The Imperial Oriental Buffet Restaurant**, School Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 4LF (parking free after 5.30pm in Beatties car park – follow sign for Beatties). Tel: 01902-429816. Open 12-2.30pm and 6-11.30pm. *Unlimited Chinese Buffet* 20+ items lunch £5.50 adults or £3.00 children under 8 years or 40+ items evenings for £10.50 adults and £5.00 children. Buffet includes Thai and some Japanese dishes. (NB: *Highly recommended by the 5-year old Heloise Tudor!*)

Xpress, 4B Wolverhampton Street, Willenhall, open Fri & Sat 5pm-11.30pm and Sun 6pm-11.30pm, (01902-602610).

English/Continental

* **Dale House**, Bilston Street, Willenhall, approx. £15 per head "British a-la-carte", building dates back to 1750 and reputedly has a ghost which occasionally shimmies across the upstairs landing, (01902-602902).

Refine, 43 Goodall Street, Walsall, WS1 1QJ (01922-648666), "sexy Sunday roast £12 for 3 courses. (Rumour has it that this serves very good food but in expensive and small portions!)

* **Ye Old TollHouse Restaurant**, Walsall Road, Willenhall. I recommend the table d'hôte Menu – excellent value for money – it includes starter, sweet, cheese and biscuits, liqueur coffee and one bottle of wine between four and ranges from £18-£23 per head depending on your main course. Their daily specials feature the most amazing range of fish dishes! (01902-605575).

Indian

Bombay Blues, 32-34 Bridge Street, Walsall, serves "Indian & fusion cuisine", (01922-647758).

* **Cinnamon Club**, Bentley Mill Way – see foot map. Although the food is highly recommended by the committee the service is **very slow**! Open Sun-Thurs 5.30pm-midnight and Fri & Sat 5.30pm-1am, (0121-568-6664).

* **Golden Moments**, 3 Ablewell Street, Walsall, *overall* winner of the Birmingham Evening Mail Restaurant for the Millennium Competition, which has amazing food and stunning *art deco* furnishings. Open Mon-Sat 6pm – midnight and Sunday 6pm-11.30pm, (01922-640363).

Jewel Balti Restaurant & Take-Away, Walsall Road, Willenhall (01902-605917).

* **Shimla Peppers**, Ablewell Street, Walsall, runner-up in the Birmingham Evening Mail Restaurant for the Millennium Competition! Shimla's features a heated courtyard as well as a ground-floor wine bar and sensational food, (01922-640605).

Italian

Deep Pan Pizza, 0121-568-8053, Bentley Mill Way (see foot map).

Pucci's, Lyndon House Hotel, Upper Rushall Street, Walsall, "the only fresh seafood restaurant in Walsall", (01922-612511).

* **Sofias**, the Guildhall, High Street, Walsall, beautiful building and tasty pasta and pizzas, (01922-632223).

Mexican

Amigos, 32 High Street, Aldridge (01922-455166).

Mama Lizzy's, 58 Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton, (01902-427255).

Pub Meals

Brewers Fayre/Brewsters Bentley Green Inn, featuring a Brewsters playroom, Bentley Road North, Walsall, (01922-724485).

Chicago Rock Café, Lichfield Street, Walsall (01922 620655).

Lane Arms, Wolverhampton Road, Bentley – see foot map, some food and locally brewed Highgate & Walsall ales.

Tap & Spile, John Street, (off Stafford Street), Walsall, Victorian real ale pub with “gut-busting meals” served Mon-Sat, (01922-627660).

The Malthouse, Wetherspoons, the Dale, Willenhall, serves food until 10pm (01902-635273).

Wharf 10 Café Bar, Town Wharf, Wolverhampton Street, Walsall, daytime food and locally brewed Highgate & Walsall ales

Spanish

The Lydiate Restaurant, 26 Station Street, Walsall, family owned restaurant, (01922-643857).

Takeaway

Aroma Balti Indian Takeaway, 195 Wolverhampton Road – see foot map, where you can get a perfectly reasonable curry from around £5+, (01922-746786).

Burgerking, Park Street, Walsall, (01922-641109).

KFC, Ablewell Street, Walsall.

McDonalds, Park Street, Walsall, (01922-621348).

McDonalds, Wolverhampton/Walsall Road, Willenhall.

Tapas

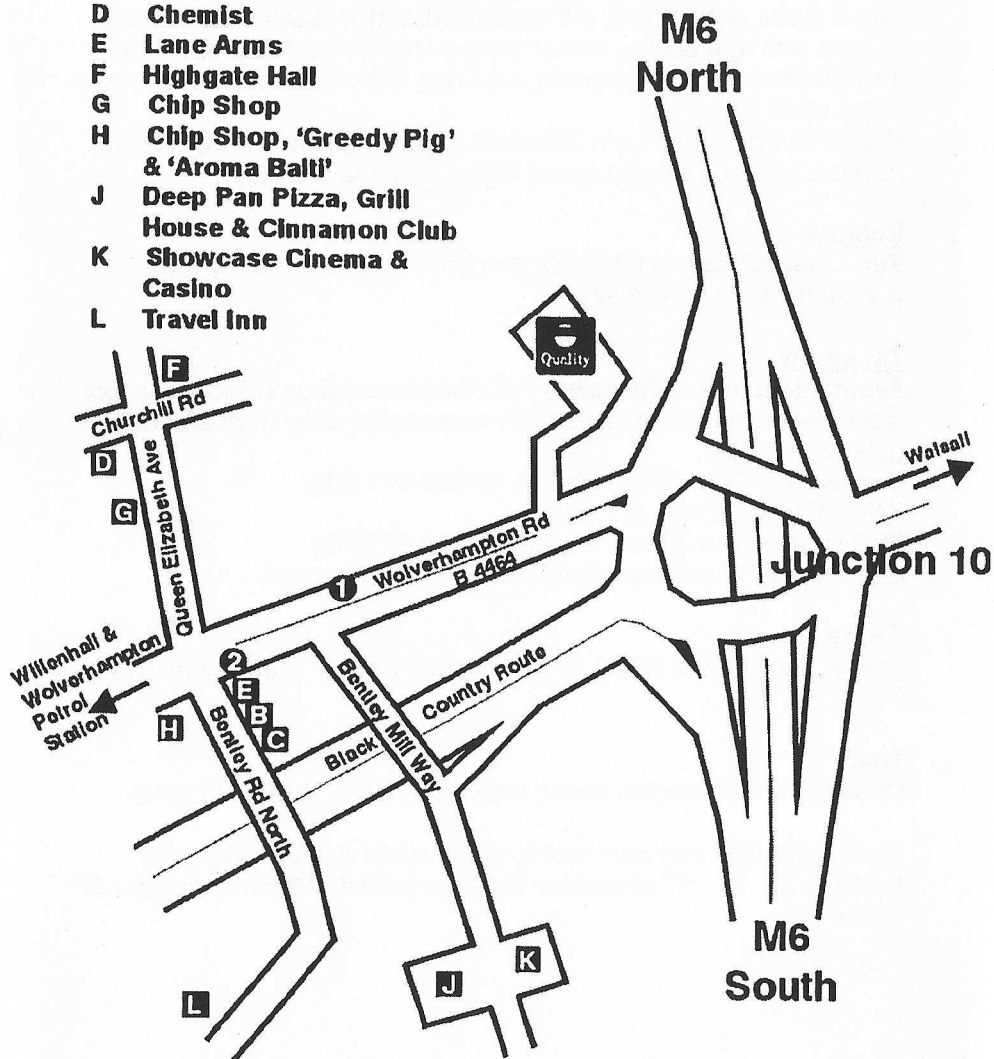
Tapas Tree, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, open 11am-2am, (01902-712733).

Thai

Made in Thai, Darlington Street, Wolverhampton, (01902-312512).

[This publication was produced by Dave Hicks & martin Tudor for Novacon 32, 1st – 3rd November 2002, on behalf of the Birmingham SF Group.]

- 1** Bus Stop to Walsall
- 2** Bus Stop to Willenhall & Wolverhampton
- Willenhall & Wolverhampton Petrol Station by Lane Arms is now CLOSED**
- Nearest is towards Willenhall (approx. 1 mile)**
- B** News Agents
- C** General Store & Off Licence
- D** Chemist
- E** Lane Arms
- F** Highgate Hall
- G** Chip Shop
- H** Chip Shop, 'Greedy Pig' & 'Aroma Balti'
- J** Deep Pan Pizza, Grill House & Cinnamon Club
- K** Showcase Cinema & Casino
- L** Travel Inn



Walsall Town Centre

